



Rosa's Story

Our big house was just so empty. Manny and I have always loved being parents and there was always a lot of noise and activity in our home. Our boys always had all the neighborhood boys over. Some nights, especially if I was making tacos, there would be six or eight teenage baseball players all crowded around the table even though only two of them were ours.

When our second son went off to college, we really missed the boys and the noise. We knew, through friends at church who are foster parents, that there were teenagers who stayed in foster care for years on end. My husband and I both knew that we were past diapers and 3 a.m. feedings but we thought we might be able to help another teenage boy or two.

We went to foster parent classes; still not sure we would become foster parents. That was six years and 11 teenage boys ago, one boy, Jake, we adopted three years ago when he was 16. Both of our biological boys have graduated from college and Jake is starting at Wazzu in the fall. All three of them are great role models for our foster sons.

Now, we still have six or eight boys around the table some nights and sometimes four of them are our own foster children.

Manny and I weren't sure we were cut out to be foster parents and we went to training almost out of curiosity. Now, we've been told we've made the difference in the lives of some pretty troubled boys, we can't tell you what a difference they've made in our lives.

If Manny and I could do it,

You can too.

Many of us made the decision to make a difference for children who have been hurt by abuse, neglect, abandonment, or the death of their caretakers.

We weren't sure at first if we had what it takes to provide for these kids. We learned that what it takes is kindness, commitment, flexibility, and a sense of humor. We learned that we did have what it takes to nurture children and we believe that if we could succeed in providing for the children who most needed the gifts of our homes and our hearts...

You can too.

If you want to learn more about becoming a foster parent, call 1-888-KIDS-414 (1-888-543-7414)

Or contact your local foster family agency at:



Across the state and in your own community, people just like you are making a difference in the lives of children.

You can too.





Foster parents care for children, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for a lifetime.

You can too.

Foster parents describe being forever changed by the experience. They serve a vital role and improve their own lives while helping to improve the lives of others.

You can too.

WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

Foster care is designed to be a temporary living situation for children and youth who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect, abandonment, or the death of their caregivers. Children remain in foster care until they can reunite with their parents or are adopted.

Foster parents and foster families take children into their homes, and often their hearts, creating for them a safe and secure place to grow.

You can too.

WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT FOSTER CARE?

- Foster parents are volunteers who receive a monthly reimbursement to help offset the cost of caring for children.
- Children with special medical needs are only placed with foster parents who have been specifically trained to care for them.
- Child care is paid for foster parents who work outside of the home.
- Medical and dental costs are covered for children in foster care.
- The length of time a child will stay with you depends on the particular child and their parent's situation. It could be for a few days, a few months or much longer.
- The goal for the child is to reunite him or her with their parents. If that does not work out, many foster parents adopt children who have come into their homes.

WHO CAN BE A FOSTER PARENT?

You can if you:

- Are 21 or older
- Are single, married, divorced or widowed
- Are male or female
- Are straight, gay, lesbian
- Are a homeowner or renter
- Have an outside source of income
- Pass a background clearance check

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

- You will need to fill out some paperwork.
- You will meet with a social worker who will talk to you about your family to determine if fostering is appropriate for you and your family.
- You will attend training to prepare you to care for the children who come into your home.
- You will also take HIV/AIDS and CPR/First Aid training.
- Everyone in your home over the age of sixteen will have to pass a background check.
- You will have an inspection of your home or apartment to make sure it is safe for children and that there is enough room for a foster child to have his or her own space.
- It typically takes 3-4 months to go through the licensing process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Who are the children needing foster care?

At any given moment in our state, 10,000 children are in need of foster care. They are:

- Children who have been abused or neglected.
- Infants with special feeding and medical needs.
- Children with physical or developmental disabilities.
- Children with emotional challenges.
- Brothers and sisters who should stay together.
- Children in need of families who are sensitive to and respectful of their culture.
- Youth who have left home or been kicked out of their homes because of sexual orientation or gender identity differences.
- Teenagers who have not had positive experiences in their own families.
- Bright, kind, resilient, funny, creative children and youth who have had negative life experiences through no fault of their own.

